1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 199 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

survivors acquire at least a limited immunity. Many observers have noted the comparative rarity among African natives of that chronic complication of malaria known as black-water fever, although it frequently attacks Europeans. Another disease, which has been found largely among Africans, and was at one time considered as a possible malarial complication, is now classified by most observers as a variety of scurvy. This disease is known to medical science by the Umbundu name of *onyalãi*.[1] Among other common diseases are yaws, tick fever, tropical ulcers, common sores, infections, intestinal parasites, and pneumonia. Others, such as bilharzia and leprosy, are less common but well known. The comparatively recent introduction and spread of pulmonary tuberculosis and the venereal diseases give cause for alarm.[2] Neither sleeping-sickness nor the cattle nagana are found. There are a number of cattle diseases, such as scab, carbuncle, quarter evil, pleuro-pneumonia, and gall-sickness.

Termites are a tropical pest present in large numbers. Their depredations require the periodical replacement of woodwork, unless made of the very few species of hard wood which they seem unable to attack. In common with all of South Africa, locusts are always to be found and they increase greatly at irregular intervals.

The *fauna* of the country under consideration includes nearly all of the commoner south and central African species. Some of the rarer and more localized species are not present, but on the other hand this is the home of certain rare species, as, for example, the giant sable.[3] The elephant, the rhinoceros, and other large species are no longer to be found in the Highland proper, but only in adjoining comparatively unpopulated regions to the west, south, and south-east. All game is comparatively scarce, which is not surprising considering that the Ovimbundu have possessed firearms for about 250 years, and considering also the extent of European settlement during the past fifty years.

[1] First reported by Dr. F. C. Wellman, a missionary physician who worked among the Ovimbundu.

[2] No figures on the incidence of any disease with reference to the population of the colony are available. Nor are population movements known, for previous to the first general census, which was taken in 1940, such figures on population as there were, were hardly more than guess-work. Results of this first census were published in 10 volumes, 1941–3. (Colónia de Angola, Repartição de Estatística Geral: *Censo Geral da População*. Luanda: Imprensa Nacional.)

[3] *Hippotragus niger varianii*.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE X

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Photo. M. W. Ennis

a. Wounded bull eland (Malolo)

Photo. R. S. Webb

b. Head of wart hog (Bailundu)

[Facing p. 129]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the occupations of warfare and of trade to the more settled agricultural life. And it is the possession and cultivation of land which provides a minimum basis for those who are also able to engage in any sort of trade, either commercial or one of the handicrafts.

Health. A sanitary history, or the course of health among the Ovimbundu throughout their national existence, would be of interest if it could be made known. Legend tells of a time in the distant past when sickness was rare and death came hardly ever, if at all. It is said that hasty burials were not permitted because there had been cases of the supposed corpse returning to life. Some have taken this to mean that the tribe came from a more healthful region than the one which it now occupies, but it seems rather to be a traditional recognition of the fact that many of the diseases and bodily ills which at present afflict the Ovimbundu are of comparatively recent date. The time of arrival of some of these unwelcome guests can be estimated. Some are the subject of traditional tales as, for example, the jigger[1] (*pulex penetrans*), which a Ngalangi tradition says came to them from Bailundu, and Bailundu tradition says was first recognized in the time of Ekongo-liohombo (*c.* 1875) or Ekuikui II (*c.* 1876–93). Now the jigger is well known in Africa as an importation from South America, and the time of its first appearance could probably be determined. This parasite is widely present in tropical Africa, but there are some regions which it has not (yet) reached.[2] Its coming to Angola is probably, therefore, of recent date. Silva Porto, writing in 1879, said, 'This evil is of recent date on the coast . . . (*pulex penetrans*).'[3] The first notice of this pest which reached the pages of the *Boletim Official* of Angola was in 1875. If this date really represents the time when the jigger first appeared in Angola, it seems strange that it should have been so late, in view of the slave-ships ferrying back and forth from Brazil for the previous three hundred years.

Small-pox[4] might also be thought of as a recent arrival for, according to a note in the *Boletim Official*, it first appeared in Novo Redondo in June 1864, having been brought from Luanda by ships' crews.[5] Its first appearance on the Plateau, however,

[1] *Ewundu* or *ocindiundiu* is the Umbundu name, from *oku wunda*, to hide (the hidden one).

[2] e.g. Amboland, according to Umbundu testimony.

[3] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., p. 10.

[4] *Ocingongo* is the Umbundu name.

[5] *Boletim Official da Provincia de Angola*, 1865, no. 5.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

growth is under examination. This central plateau, the Benguela Highlands, rises in places to a height of 6,000 feet, an altitude which reduces the heat of the tropics and so modifies the flora, discouraging some types of vegetation and encouraging others. Hostility of the highlands to palm trees and the banana is appropriately discussed when dealing with cultural losses; while the fostering effect of reduced temperature and the presence of wide expanses of open country on the growth of maize and the keeping of cattle is a cultural gain.

The prevailing rains of Angola are from the northeast to the southwest; consequently the high plateau intercepts rain clouds which give an annual fall of sixty inches. This adequate rainfall is another factor which has affected economic life, density of population, communal welfare, and powers of expansion.

The villages of the Ovimbundu are built on hillsides having a commanding view of the surrounding country. There is in the nature of the land a natural protection from enemies. In addition to this the Benguela Highlands are an admirable base from which expeditions both predatory and commercial might, and actually did set out eastward to the interior of Africa, and southwest to the cattle-keeping country.

It is important to note that this central plateau is the watershed for four large river systems; the Kwanza to the northwest; the Cunene to the southwest; the tributaries of the Kasai to the northeast; and the Zambezi and its affluents to the southeast. Fishing, with attendant beliefs of a ritualistic kind, is of local importance; so also is the making of canoes. Moreover, the river valleys have marked out a natural means of communication in several directions.

In connection with the river system the biological factor of the tsetse fly is important, because the presence of the fly locally discourages human habitation and prevents the keeping of cattle. The exact distribution of the fly is imperfectly known, but *Glossinia palpalis*, the cause of sleeping sickness in human beings, also *Glossinia morsitans*, which carries disease to cattle, are both present along the Kwanza and parts of the other rivers (J. C. B. Statham, Through Angola, p. 294).

The western coastal strip is a region of great aridity which has in some years no rainfall whatever, because the northeasterly rains have expended themselves on the high plateau. This region displays vegetation of the semi-desert type; namely, baobab trees, prickly acacias, euphorbias, and aloes. Population in this area is sparse, always nomadic, and in some places non-existent. The coastal strip

The coastal strip

131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
[177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

The south and southwest parts of Angola are of particular importance in studying the contacts of the Ovimbundu, but to give here the details of the wealthy cattle-keeping culture of these regions, which were accessible through peaceful proximity, trade, and occasional raiding, would be an anticipation of chapter X, "Culture Contacts."
[723] One topographical point is of primary importance; namely, the ease with which the Ovimbundu could descend from their strongholds to the low-lying land of the west and south, whereas the reverse journey is much more difficult for a people unaccustomed to manoeuvring and finding their way among hills.

101 Having described the northern, central, western, and southern areas, there remains only the eastern section to consider; this presents
[133] several features of peculiar geographical and ethnological interest. The eastern section of Angola is either slightly undulating or flat,
[136] the general characteristic is dryness, and vegetation is somewhat sparse though sufficient to shelter many kinds of antelope.

The major population is the Vachokue, a warlike, hunting people, who follow agricultural pursuits but slightly, and do not keep cattle. Examination of the literature describing early exploration indicates
[726] the truculent nature of these eastern people with whom caravans of Ovimbundu were in frequent conflict. Umbundu caravans crossed this country when making their way to Rhodesia, culture contacts with which are discussed in chapter X.

The results of contact of Ovimbundu and Vachokue tribes, so far as physical miscegenation is concerned, are mentioned in chapter "Physical Appearance"; while the social effects of slavery resulting from hostilities are described in chapter VI, "Social Life."

174 Rhodesia is a cattle-raising country, but the hostility of the
231 Vachokue, the great distance from central Angola to Rhodesia, and the general dryness of the country to be crossed, discourage the idea that the Ovimbundu obtained their cattle from Rhodesia. If it is

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my [621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on [281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom [775] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51); [524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at [881] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more [283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor. [231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and [202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten [266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted